

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.
for
THE URBAN SANITARY DISTRICT OF CAMBORNE, CORNWALL.
for the year ending the 31st. December 1896.

To the Chairman and Members of the
Camborne Urban District Council.
Gentlemen,

I have the pleasure to present to you my report on the Sanitary condition of your District for the year 1896.

Calculated on the rates of increase in the population of Camborne between the census of 1881 and that of 1891, the estimated population at the middle of 1896 would be 15,277.

But taking into consideration the continued emigration to South Africa, Western Australia, India and other places, I have taken the population of 1891 viz. 14,700, as probably affording a more nearly accurate estimate for calculating the various birth and death rates.
Births.

During the year 361 births (191 males and 170 females) were registered, giving a birth rate of 24.55 per 1,000 as compared with 31.08 for the previous year.

The total number of illegitimate births registered during the year was 12, giving an illegitimate birth rate of 0.81 per 1,000 of the population, and a proportion of 33 to 1,000 births.

It is satisfactory to know that this is considerably below the average rate for the country generally.

Deaths.

During the year 253 deaths (135 males and 118 females) were registered, giving a death rate of 17.21 per 1,000 as compared with 20.61 for the previous year.

Natural Increment 108.

Of the Deaths 75 were in infants under one year of age, and were due to the following causes:-

Diseases of the Digestive System 18.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DO hereby certify that

the following is a true and correct copy
of the original as the same appears in the

records of the

Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management,
Washington, D. C., this 1st day of January, 1901.
In testimony whereof, the said Department has caused this
certificate to be signed by its Acting Secretary, and the
Seal of the Department to be hereunto affixed.

UNITED STATES

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE ACTING SECRETARY OF THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
DO hereby certify that the following is a true and correct
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Diseases of the Respiratory System.	16.
" " " Nervous "	9.
Marasmus.	13.
Atrophy.	8.
Prematurity.	4.
Whooping-Cough.	1.
Rachitis.	1.
Other Diseases.	5.

This gives a very high infant mortality of 204.98 per 1,000 births, which, considered in relation to the statistics of other towns and counties, appears to be considerably above the average of the country generally.

The result of investigations as to the causes of this high infant mortality, leads to the belief, that improper food and methods of feeding must be classed as the chief factors.

The pernicious habit which prevails, of feeding infants of a few days or weeks old on baked flour, boiled bread, biscuits and other starchy foods in place of milk, together with the ^{frequent} use of uncleanly bottles, often containing milk in an incipient state of putrefaction, are common causes of diarrhoea, vomiting, convulsions and the general wasting diseases of infants.

Repeated advice by medical men seems to have but little effect in remedying the evil.

~~Ten~~ ~~Eight~~ deaths occurred in children between one and five years of age, and fifty-seven in people sixty-five years of age and over.

Zymotic Death-Rate.

Twelve deaths were from diarrhoea, six from typhoid fever, and two from whooping-cough, giving a zymotic death rate of 1.40 per 1,000 of the population.

Inquest Cases.

There were fourteen Inquest Cases and of these:-

Three were accidentally killed in Dolcoath Mine.

One accidentally killed through the fall of the roof of a foundry.

Two were found dead in bed, the causes not ascertained.

One found dead at a mine surface, the cause not ascertained.

Two died from the effects of accidental burns.

One death was due to convulsions.

Two to failure of the Heart's action.

One was due to natural causes, and

One woman cut her throat while of unsound mind.

Twenty-eight deaths occurred from Phthisis, being 11.06 % of the total deaths, and giving a death rate from Phthisis of 1.9 per 1,000 of the population.

Forty-five deaths were from other respiratory diseases giving a mortality of 17.7 % of the total deaths and a death rate of 3.06 per 1,000 of the population. It will thus be seen that Respiratory Diseases account for 28 % of the deaths.

Eleven deaths were from Tubercular Diseases other than Phthisis, twenty-eight were due to Heart Disease, eighteen to Cancer, and four were from Diabetes.

Infectious Diseases.

During the year 112 cases of Infectious Diseases were notified, as compared with 310 of the previous year.

This gives an infectious disease rate of 7.4 per 1,000 of the population, but at no period during the year did any disease approach in character to an epidemic.

Small-Pox.

For the first time for nearly twenty years small pox made its appearance in or near this district.

On the 14th of February a case was notified to me at North Parade in the town of Camborne.

On enquiry I found that the patient was a passenger from Cape Town, and landed at Plymouth on the 4th of the month, so that he must have contracted the disease on board ship.

I immediately communicated with the medical officer of Health of the Port Sanitary Authority at Plymouth, informing him of the facts

It is a very common mistake to suppose that the

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of the case, and asking information as to the possible source of infection.

There being no hospital to which the case could be removed, the person was isolated as far as possible in his own home, the one in attendance was re-vaccinated, and the necessity of re-vaccination impressed upon those living in the immediate vicinity.

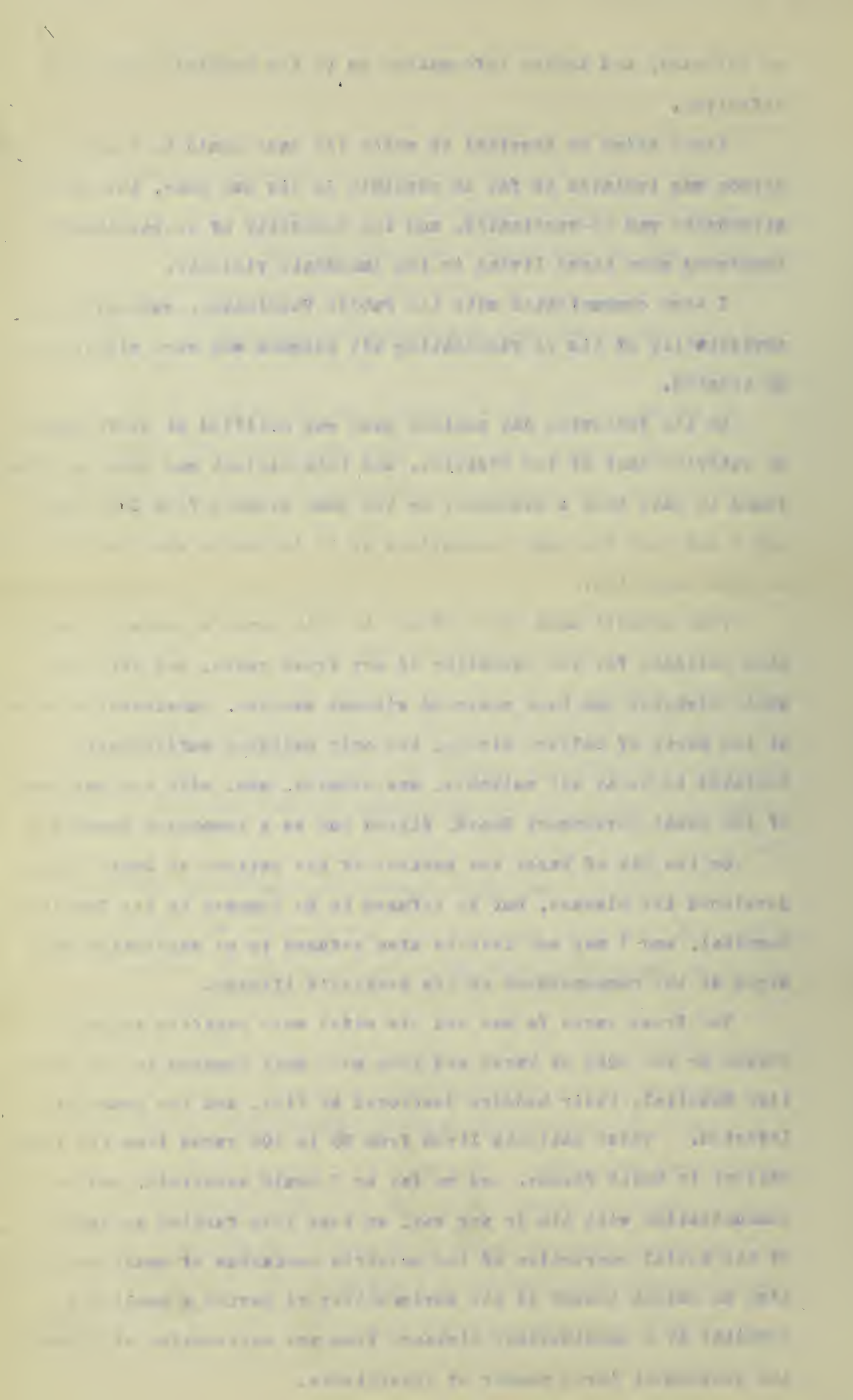
I also communicated with the Public Vaccinator, suggesting the advisability of his re-vaccinating all persons who were willing to be so treated.

On the following day another case was notified at Croft Common, an outlying part of the District, and this patient was also on enquiry found to have been a passenger on the same steamer from Cape Town, and I saw that the same precautions as to isolation were carried out in this case also.

Your Council used every effort at this stage to obtain a suitable building for the isolation of any fresh cases, and after the whole District had been searched without success, Dunstanville House at the North of College Street, the only building sufficiently isolated to be at all suitable, was secured, and, with the approval of the Local Government Board, fitted out as a temporary hospital.

On the 6th of March the brother of the patient at Croft Common developed the disease, but he refused to be removed to the Isolation Hospital, and I may add that he also refused to be vaccinated when urged at the commencement of his brother's illness.

Two fresh cases (a man and his wife) were notified at North Parade on the 30th of March and they were both removed to the isolation Hospital, their bedding destroyed by fire, and the house disinfected. These patients lived from 80 to 100 yards from the first patient in North Parade, and so far as I could ascertain, had had no communication with him in any way, so that they furnish an example of the aerial convection of the specific contagium of small pox, and also an object lesson of the advisability of having a small pox hospital at a considerable distance from any aggregation of houses and consequent large number of inhabitants.



Two abortive cases, (one at Croft Common in an inmate of an adjoining house, and one at Troon in a sister of the previous cases,) occurred, but, beyond these, no fresh cases were notified, nor did the disease attack any children, nor did any deaths occur.

This happy ending to what at first threatened to be a serious epidemic, was without doubt due to the stringent measures which your Council took to check the spread of the disease as well as ^{to} the fact that the district was fairly well protected by efficient infant vaccination.

Of the seven (7) cases of small pox the two most severe ones had never been vaccinated, and the others, who only had the disease in a very mild form, had not (with one exception) been vaccinated since infancy.

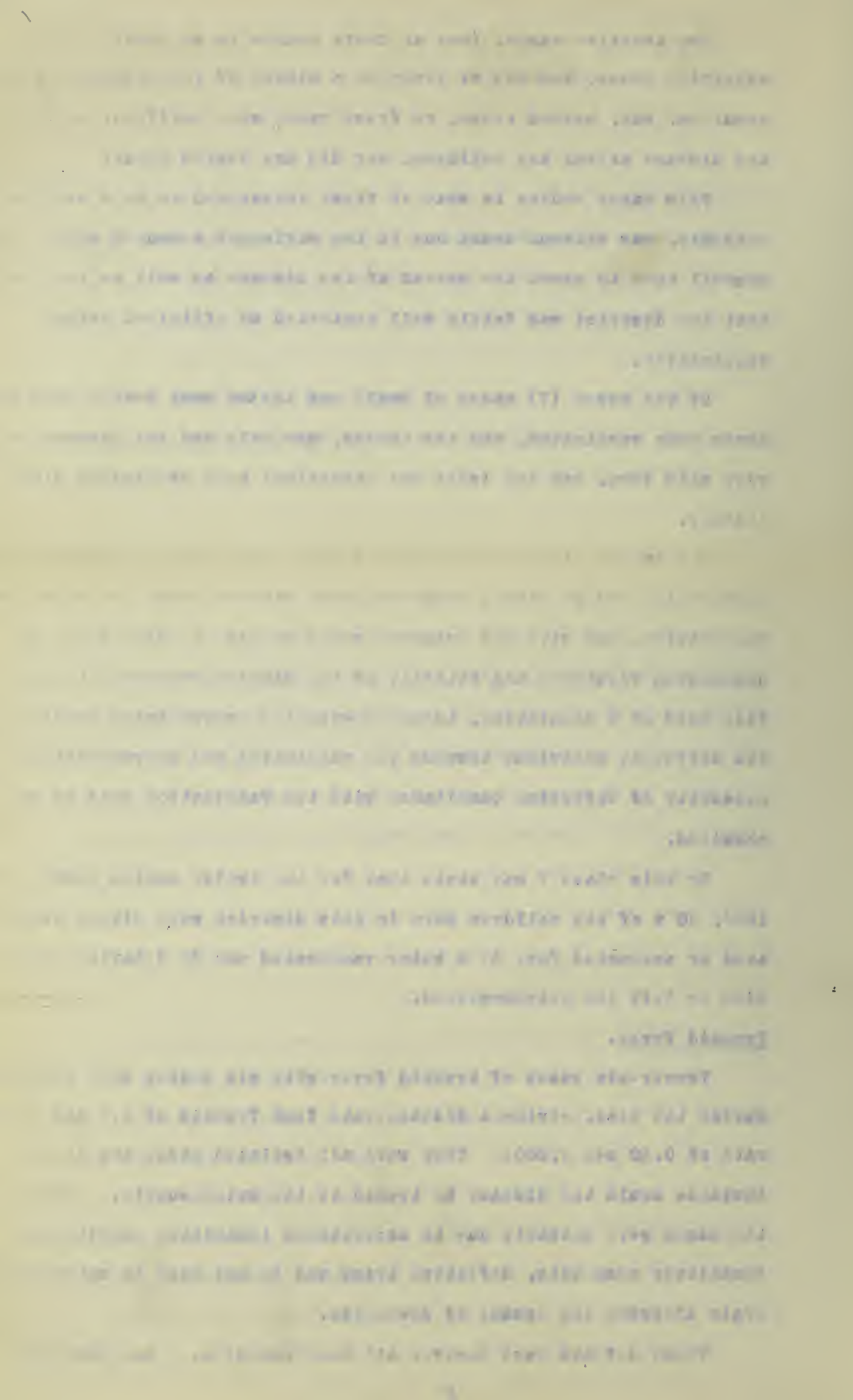
Statistics of past epidemics of small pox, and the history of those which had so lately occurred prove without doubt the value of vaccination, and with the evidence which we have to-day of the undiminished virulence and fatality of the disease whenever it gets fair hold of a population, together with the overwhelming proofs of its different behaviour towards the vaccinated and un-vaccinated, the necessity of enforcing compliance with the Vaccination Acts is emphasized.

In this place I may state that for the twelve months ending June 1896, 90 % of the children born in this district were either vaccinated or accounted for, 69 % being vaccinated and 21 % having either died or left the neighbourhood.

Typhoid Fever.

Twenty-six cases of typhoid fever with six deaths were notified during the year, giving a disease rate from Typhoid of 1.7 and a death rate of 0.40 per 1,000. They were all isolated cases and in no instance could the disease be traced to the water-supply. Eight of the cases were probably due to ascertained insanitary conditions; insanitary cess pits, defective traps and in one case an untrapped drain allowing the escape of sewer gas.

These defects have however all been remedied. One case was



imported from South Wales and one from St. Ives, and one death^{was} in a patient ~~was~~ notified in 1895 and who contracted the disease in Johannesburg. In ^{the} other cases no apparent cause could be discovered.

Scarlet Fever.

Forty-one cases were notified during the year, but they were all of a mild type, scattered over different parts of the district, and none were fatal.

In addition to these eleven cases of Diphtheria, two of Membranous Croup, twenty-one of Erysipelas and four of Continued Fever were notified.

There was an absence of any epidemic during the year and beyond several cases of chicken-pox in May and diarrhoea in August there was no prevalence of any particular disease.

In all cases of Infectious Disease brought to my notice, disinfectants (Jeye's Fluid) have been freely supplied, and cards giving instructions as to the means to be taken to prevent the spread of disease have been distributed.

Cards giving instructions as to the disinfection and cleansing of schools have also been distributed to the different public schools in the district.

I must here call attention to the gross carelessness displayed by those living in infected houses, and the disregard which they often show to the repeated advice given them. I must recommend to your particular attention the great need which exists in this district of some efficient form of disinfecting apparatus, efficient disinfection by dry heat or steam of infected clothing and bedding, being a most important aid to the checking of the spread of infection and I trust you will see your way to purchasing some form of disinfectant at an early date.

You have cause for congratulations in the fact that you now possess the site for a hospital in which cases of infectious disease can be isolated, and which, if properly utilized will do much to

prevent the spread of any epidemic and thus insure the saving of many lives, and prevent distress and avoidable expense to the inhabitants who may unfortunately be called upon to deal with cases of infectious diseases. The more this fact is appreciated, the greater will be found to be the benefit of having an efficient isolation hospital always at hand.

Water Supply.

In June last I called your attention to the insanitary condition of the Water Supply at Penponds. Your Sanitary Committee visited the spot and as a result the whole of the pipes were taken up, the spring enclosed, and the pipes relaid. During the year I have not been able to detect any case of disease arising from the drinking of impure water. I am therefore pleased to be able to state, that, with the exception of Penponds above referred to, the water supply during the whole year has been abundant and good, and there is no place in the district without an adequate and accessible supply of pure drinking water.

Drainage.

As regards drainage, the Stray Park Main Drain has been extended to Bellman's Row, a distance of 390 ft.

Automatic Flushing Tanks have been erected at Pendarves Road and the West End of Roskear Villas, and one is about to be erected at the West End of Dolcoath Road.

Similiar tanks are still required for Sea View Terrace, Troon and Bareppa, and the erection of these should engage your early attention.

The drainage of eighty-five dwelling houses has been connected with the main sewers, and the drains of forty-six others have been repaired and put in order.

The Main Sewers have been periodically inspected and flushed, and disinfected with "Jeye's Fluid."

Nine W C's have been provided for private dwellings.

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As regards other sanitary work done during the year:-

Twenty-seven notices have been served on the owners of private dwellings for the providing of closet accomodation, and twenty water or earth closets have been erected.

Fourteen new houses have been inspected and certified to be fit for occupation, seven of these are provided with W C's and the remainder with earth-closets.

Sixteen plans were submitted to and passed by the Council, representing eight new dwelling houses and additions to four others, erection of new premises at Messrs Holman Bros. foundry, and extension to the Working Men's Club, and the Tuckermill Safety Fuse Factories.

During the year 2580 ft. of 6 in and 2102 ft of 4 in drain pipes were laid down.

During the year 112 notices were served and 96 nuisances Abated.

Scavenging.

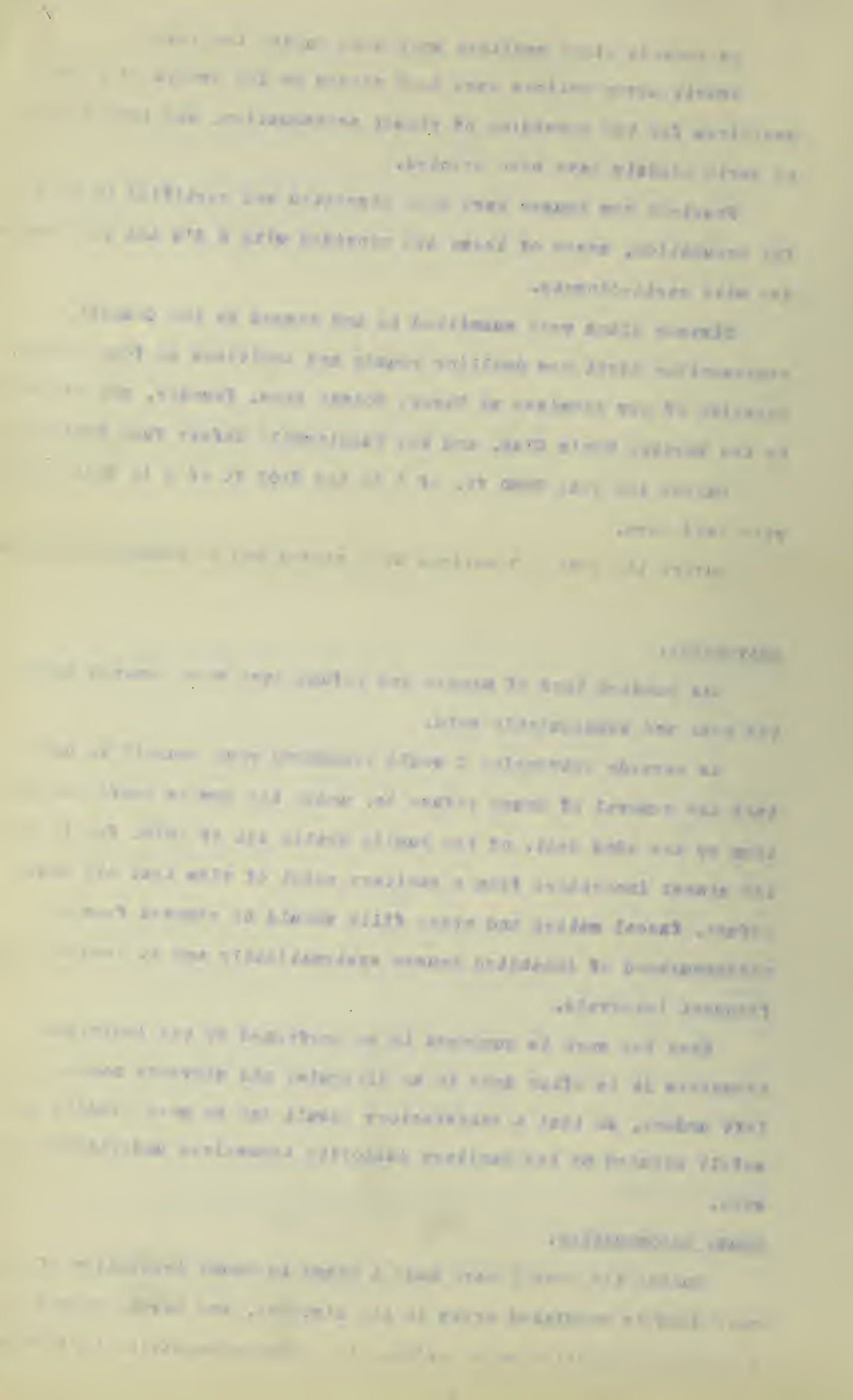
Six hundred tons of manure and refuse have been removed during the year and subsequently sold.

As regards scavenging I would recommend your council to undertake the removal of House refuse &c, under the powers conferred upon them by the 42nd Sect. of the Public Health Act of 1875, for it is of the utmost importance from a sanitary point of view that all house refuse, faecal matter and other filth should be removed from the neighbourhood of inhabited houses systematically and at regular and frequent intervals.

When the work is supposed to be performed by the individual occupiers it is often done in an irregular and slovenly manner, or left undone, so that a satisfactory result can be more readily and safely secured by the Sanitary Authority themselves undertaking the work.

House Accomodation.

During the year I have made a house-to-house inspection of the more densely populated areas in the district, and having regard to the large population which exists, the houseaccomodation is fairly



satisfactory and adequate to the reasonable requirements of the working classes of the district.

A few cases of overcrowding exist here and there which have been brought to your notice, but taking into consideration the depression which exists in the district, and the high rentals expected by the owners of house property, it is not easy to find a satisfactory solution to the difficulty.

Your council have however dealt with the matter as far as practicable.

After notice from your inspector, 107 houses have been repaired and put into proper sanitary condition by the owners.

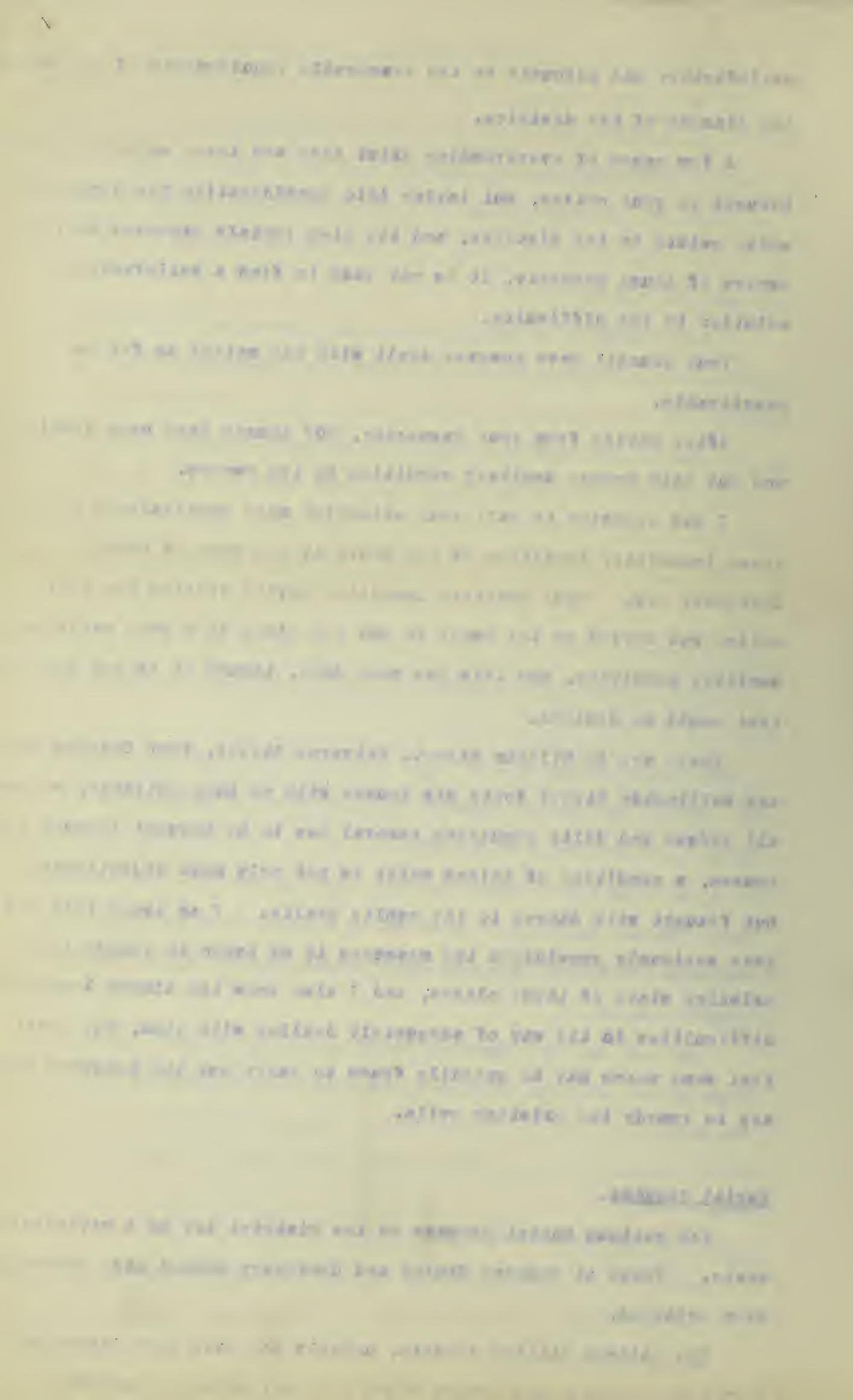
I had occasion to call your attention more particularly to the gross insanitary condition of the Court at the back of Middle Centenary Row. Your Sanitary Committee having visited the spot, notice was served on the owner to put the place in a more satisfactory sanitary condition, and this has been done, though it is not yet all that could be desired.

There are in William Street, Tolcarne Street, West Charles Street, and Wellington Street forty six houses with no back entrance, so that all refuse and filth requiring removal has to be brought through the houses, a condition of things which is not only most objectionable, but fraught with danger to the public health. I am aware that you have seriously considered the measures to be taken to remedy the existing state of these places, and I also know the almost insuperable difficulties in the way of adequately dealing with them, but trust that some means may be speedily found to carry out the measures necessary to remedy the existing evils.

Burial Grounds.

The various burial grounds in the District are in a satisfactory state. Those at Roskear Church and Centenary Chapel have recently been enlarged.

The Railway Station closets, urinals &c, have been inspected from time to time, and always found in a satisfactory sanitary



condition.

Schools.

The sanitary arrangements of the various public schools in the District are satisfactory, and no complaint has been required to be made of any of them during the year.

Slaughter Houses.

The slaughter houses in the District are not registered but they have all been regularly inspected both by myself and the Sanitary Inspector.

Two of them have been improved during the year, in one instance a concrete floor has been laid down and in the other water has been laid on. The majority of them require several alterations to make them comply with the requirements laid down in your bye-laws, and I would urge upon you the necessity of enforcing these requirements being promptly attended to, so that all the slaughter houses may either be registered or cease to exist as such.

Common Lodging-Houses.

There is only one Common Lodging House in the district, and this is periodically inspected.

It should be registered, the court paved, W C's erected in place of the existing privies which are not in a satisfactory sanitary condition, and the other requirements of your bye-laws complied with.

Unless the bye-laws are observed and the house registered, it should be closed as a lodging house, or the occupier proceeded against.

Bake-Houses.

The bake houses are not registered but I recommend that this be done.

Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops.

I have inspected the majority of the Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milk-shops in the district as far as they could be ascertained,

but as they are not registered, doubtless many of them have escaped my notice.

I regret to say that many of them are in anything but a satisfactory sanitary condition.

It is of the utmost importance as regards the Public Health that the provisions of the Dairies, Cowsheds and Milk-shops Order of 1885 and the amending order of 1886 - orders which are obligatory upon every Sanitary Authority - should be enforced, and, with this end in view, I would recommend your Council to compel the owners of all such premises to have them registered, and that failing this, they be closed or the occupiers prosecuted.

Regulations could then be made for prescribing and regulating the lighting, ventilating, cleansing drainage and water supply of all dairies and cowsheds, for securing the cleanliness of milkstores, milkshops and milk-vessels used for containing milk for sale, and for prescribing and enforcing the necessary precautions to be taken by sellers of milk against possible infection or contamination of the milk supply.

The importance from a sanitary point of view of the satisfactory enforcing of these regulations can hardly be exaggerated.

The Meat & Fish Markets. have been regularly inspected every week and always found in a satisfactory condition.

There has been no necessity for the seizure of food as unfit for human consumption, nor has any prosecution been undertaken or necessary under the Sale of Food & Drugs Act.

Offensive Trades.

No offensive trades are carried on in the District and consequently no complaints have been lodged concerning any.

Bye-Laws.

Bye-laws framed on the Model Bye-laws drawn up by the Local Government Board are in force in this district embracing the

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following subjects:-

New Streets & Buildings.

Hackney Carriages.

Public Wash-Houses.

Common Lodging Houses.

Slaughter Houses.

Nuisances.

These have been in force since 1886.

In conclusion I would recommend to your future consideration the advisability of adopting the Public Health Amendment Act and The Infectious Diseases Prevention Act of 1890. I would also recommend you to consider the advisability of taking the steps necessary for the drainage of Beacon and also to proceed with the construction of the flushing tanks for the sewers where not already in use, and the substituting of new syphons in some of the flushing tanks which do not answer satisfactorily, and the connecting of all houses not yet connected, both in the town and also at Troon, Bareppa and Tuckingmill, with the main sewers.

Having regard to the nature of the employment of the working population in this district, I think the death rate is not above what might be expected, and on the whole, I am pleased to be able to express the opinion, that, subject to the recommendations in the foregoing report, the sanitary condition of your district may be considered satisfactory.

I have the honour to be, gentlemen,

Your Obedient servant,

J. Salfur Thomas

Medical Officer of Health.

Camborne, February 1897.

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